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- On 1 November 1952, by governmental decree and with the backing of the Central Committee of the SED, the East German Chamber for Foreign Trade (Kammer fuer Aussenhandel) (KfA) was formed. The KfA was founded as a result of experience gained at the Moscow Economic Conference of 1952 and is modelled after similar organizations existing in most of the Soviet satellites and in many "capitalistic" countries. It is located in East Berlin at Unter den Linden 40.
- The KfA consists of a praesidium, main departments for trade relations, trade technology and fairs and advertising; it also contains a protocol department and a secretariat. As of 20 January 1953 the organization employed approximately 60 people, but the table of organization was not yet fully completed, nor had the charter for the organization been agreed upon. There were also still areas of overlapping jurisdiction between the KfA and the East German Ministry of Internal and Foreign Trade which had to be decided upon.
- The main objective of the KfA is to foster trade with all capitalistic countries; trade with the USSR and Soviet satellites is not handled by the Chamber. A secondary objective of the KfA is implementation of the theory that, if a country has manifold business connections with East Germany, then it will eventually have to recognize East Germany diplomatically.
- In order to foster trade with non-Communist countries, the KfA is to deal directly either with foreign chambers of commerce or with foreign firms and sales agencies, a thing which reasons of prestige prevent an official body like the Ministry of Internal and Foreign Trade from doing. The KfA is to engage in a concerted effort to make East German goods sell and to attempt to import products which have been designated as critical for the fulfillment of the Five-Year Plan. In order to facilitate the sale of East German products, the KfA is to contact chambers of commerce in foreign countries and to send them literature advertising East German goods. It is to advertise East German products by participating in industrial fairs in all capitalistic countries. Furthermore, it is to smooth the way for the foreign purchaser by handling all the details involved in drawing up contracts, sales agreements, in chartering ships, etc.; the final agreement is to be given to the appropriate DIA sections, where it will be signed by a DIA

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representative and a member of the foreign firm. In order to stimulate imports, the KfA is to exchange lists of goods needed and goods available with the chambers of commerce and/or firms of foreign countries. As in the case of exports, the KfA will handle all details in setting up the contract, chartering the shipping, etc., and the representatives of DIA and of the foreign enterprise will be presented with a finished agreement for their signatures.

5. The following are the duties and responsibilities of the various sections of the KfA:

- a. Praesidium: As of 20 January 1953, the Praesidium consisted of Dr. Gottfried Lessing, the head of the KfA, and of the directors of the various DIA's. It is expected that more personnel will eventually become members of the Praesidium. The heads of the main departments are not members of the Praesidium; they do, however, meet with Dr. Lessing every week, usually Friday or Saturday.
- b. Protocol Department: The Protocol Department is directly responsible to the Praesidium. It is as yet unstaffed. Its duties will be to receive representatives of foreign enterprises, ascertain their wishes, and introduce them to the appropriate Main Department director, Department Director or Referent for Country. Business talks and transactions are conducted in this office. Everything said is immediately taken down and becomes a matter of record.
- c. Secretariat: This is not a secretariat in the executive sense but merely a pool for stenographers and secretaries. As of 20 January there were only two secretaries in the pool, one of whom was a female SED member named (fnu) Knustel.
- d. Main Department for Trade Technology (Hauptabteilung Handelstechnik): This Main Department is headed by (fnu) Mellmann. It collects all kinds of information on customs, foreign exchange, embargoes, and the like.
- e. Main Department for Fairs and Advertising (Hauptabteilung Messen und Werbung): (fnu) Adam and (fnu) Dietrich work in this Main Department. The section is responsible for sending export periodicals, catalogues and advertising material to foreign countries. It is further responsible for planning East German participation in foreign industrial fairs, renting space for East German exhibits, setting up exhibits, etc. The Main Department is broken down into two Departments; one (Werbung) handles advertising and publicity, and the other (Messen) handles industrial fairs.
- f. Main Department for Trade Relations (Hauptabteilung Handelsbeziehungen): This main department is headed by a political appointee, (fnu) Wolter. The section handles the actual arrangement of connections between the appropriate DIA and the foreign buyer or seller. So far it has sent all foreign chambers of commerce letters announcing the formation of the KfA and inviting an exchange of correspondence or of representatives to discuss the possibility of doing business. It has also exchanged lists of goods for sale by or needed by East Germany with foreign enterprises and reported to the Praesidium which firms are interested in importing and exporting goods. It is also the job of the Main Department to make preliminary preparations for drawing up contracts and to draw up the draft form of the contracts to be signed. The contracts go to DIA-Kompensation for signing.

There are four departments, (Abteilungen) arranged geographically, under the Main Department: one for Europe, one for the Americas, one for Asia and Africa, and one which has not yet been activated. Each department has Referate for the individual countries or group of countries which fall under the jurisdiction of the department. Since the Referate have just begun to function, one referent will handle several countries until the Referate are fully staffed.

- g. Interpreters: So far the KfA has only one interpreter, (fnu) Hartmann, who handles English. It is attempting to hire interpreters for French, Spanish and other languages. The interpreters will be available for use by any main department or departments of KfA.

6. The chief function of the KfA is, therefore, the establishment of business connections. It is not involved in foreign trade planning. The entire import and export plan is in the hands of the Ministry for Internal and Foreign Trade. Orders go out from the Ministry to the various DIA's for materials according to priorities established within the framework of the Five-Year plan. The KfA contacts representatives of foreign firms or chambers of commerce and then relays them to the DIA's.

